First Engagement: A Field Guide for Explorers

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PROSPECTORS & DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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Introduction

You are a geologist or project manager working at the site level of a new mineral exploration project or an existing project that is new to your company. As part of your work, you will be responsible for, or on a team that is involved in, community engagement. You know it is important to the success of the project that your company is on good terms with local stakeholders, but your formal education and technical training likely didn't cover this. It may be unclear to you what to do and where to begin. If this scenario is familiar, this guide is for you. It aims to be a practical and straightforward resource to support you in building a strong and positive company-community relationship at the site level.

Many guides on community and stakeholder relations have been produced for extractive sector companies. The PDAC's *e3 Plus: A Framework for Responsible Exploration*[1] was the first resource designed specifically for exploration companies interested in improving their social, environmental and health and safety performance. Recently, additional resources have been created to support extractive companies with their community engagement activities.[2] This guide is intended to complement existing publications. It was produced in response to extensive stakeholder consultations undertaken by PDAC in 2013 that identified the importance of developing a positive company-community relationship, and addresses the need for practical, step-by-step guidance to apply at the site level.

From a practical perspective, engagement is the central component of any relationship-building process. In this guide, we refer to community engagement as the process of dialogue and interaction that ensures all parties of interest are informed about, and have the opportunity to participate in, the decisions that affect their lives. After a brief explanation of why it is important to engage in the first place, this guide will walk you through a step-by-step process for community engagement. The steps are organized into four chronological phases:

What can you find out about the area before leaving for the project site?

What do you do in your first days and weeks at the project site?

Once the relationship has been initiated, how do you build momentum and scale-up your activities?

Whether or not you plan to return, how do you leave the project with your relationships intact?

1 Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada, "e3 Plus," 2015, http://www.pdac.ca/programs/e3-plus.

2 For example, the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement in the Extractives Sector, a draft of which was made available for public comment in April 2015 at https://mneguidelines.oecd.org/stakeholder-engagement-extractive-industries.htm. See also the IFC Good Practice Handbook for Junior Companies in the Extractive Industries http://commdev.org/strategic-approach-early-stakeholder-engagement.

Why Engagement Matters

Here are a few practical reasons (the business case) outlining why it is important to develop a healthy company-community relationship:

- **Access to land:** Establishing and maintaining good stakeholder relations is often critical to securing and maintaining access to land, even when all of your permits are in order.
- **Access to capital:** Investors are increasingly looking at social and environmental risks when evaluating companies in the exploration and mining industry. The ability to demonstrate that your company has a good relationship with local stakeholders can help improve investor confidence in your project. Many major financial institutions now apply the Equator Principles[3] to their investment decisions, which assess projects' environmental and social risks.
- **Project value and sale:** Prior to purchasing an exploration project, mining companies conduct above-ground assessments as part of their due diligence process, evaluating risks such as community opposition to the project. As such, an exploration company's success in building a positive relationship with local communities and managing above-ground risks can increase the project's attractiveness to investors or prevent the value of the project from being discounted.
- **Reduced time and cost of operations:** The time and energy required to establish a healthy company-community relationship is minimal in comparison to the resources required to repair a relationship once it is damaged. By engaging communities early, and opening the lines of communication, you are better able to identify and address issues before they become serious problems. This helps reduce the likelihood of project delays caused by community opposition, which can cost your company money. A recent report by the SHIFT project quantified the cost of social conflict for a world-class mining project (with capital expenditures of between $3 and $5 billion) at around $20 million per week in terms of delayed production.[4] Proactively sharing information with communities also ensures you don't leave a vacuum to be filled by misinformation about the project, which could create obstacles for you and your company in the future.
- **Beyond the business case:** Exploration and mining companies have the opportunity to be part of the larger socio-economic development process at the community level. Engaging with local communities helps companies understand local socio-economic development goals and identify how they can contribute to sustainable growth in the community. And, obviously, it is much more enjoyable to work *with* others rather than to have to work around or against them.

3 The Equator Principles Association, "About Equator Principles," 2011, http://www.equator-principles.com/index.php/about-ep/about-ep.

4 Rachel Davis and Daniel Franks, "The costs of conflict with local communities in the extractive industry," First International Seminar on Social Responsibility in Mining (SRMining2011), Santiago, Chile, October 19-21, 2011, chapter 6, http://shiftproject.org/sites/default/files/Davis%20&%20Franks_Costs%20of%20Conflict_SRM.pdf

Demystifying Engagement

Some misperceptions about community engagement exist. The following incorrect assumptions can lead companies to limit or avoid engaging with local stakeholders.

ASSUMPTION	REALITY
"Engagement is difficult; it needs to be done by experts."	You engage with people all the time: when you speak with local staff, have a drink in a bar, or buy something at a local shop. Community engagement is about being more aware of what you say and ask, and taking note of how people respond. Simple daily activities, such as buying a loaf of bread, can be an opportunity to share information, hear local perspectives, and provide the company with a human face.
"Engagement only leads to requests for projects that cost money."	Especially during the first phase of an exploration project, what most local stakeholders want is a relationship with the company and access to information. Often the demand for projects or donations is actually the result of a lack of a healthy company-community relationship.
"Engagement only raises expectations. It is better to limit engagement as much as possible."	You can't manage expectations by staying silent. Not engaging means risks are not addressed and misinformation is likely to spread.
"We are a very small group of people. We do not have time to engage."	Engagement does not require talking to every person about every issue. It's about being strategic when meeting with key groups on their turf in a respectful manner.

Good Practice

The underlying elements of good community engagement are predictable across most contexts. In general, people all around the world are concerned about the same things and respond well to similar approaches. Regardless of timeframes and budgets, even a single geologist working alone can accomplish a great deal at little cost if guided by the following points on good practice:

– **Say what you do and do what you say:** Following through on promises and commitments is critical to building credibility and the foundation for trust; not following through can damage the company-community relationship.

– **Listen:** Don't make assumptions about what people think, need or feel. Let them tell you in their own words and at their own pace. Try to understand any underlying concerns, hopes and desires they may have. One way to encourage people to share these underlying interests is by asking follow-up questions like, "Why do you say that?"

– **Show that you have listened:** You can do this through your body language (looking people in the eyes if culturally appropriate, nodding, and not looking at your watch or fidgeting during long comments or meetings) but also by summarizing the point the other person has made and asking if you understood correctly.

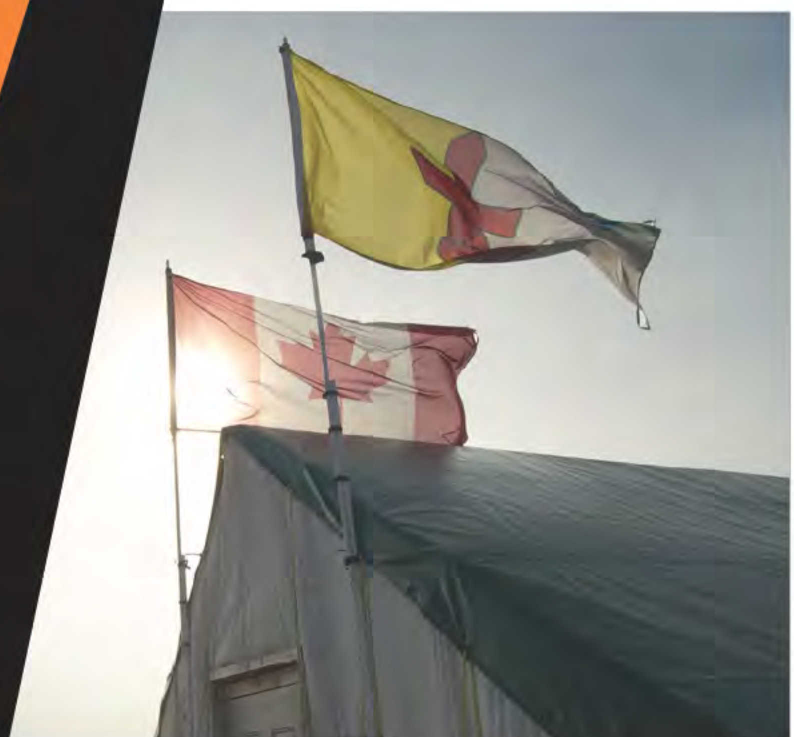
- **Engagement must be ongoing:** If you only meet with stakeholders when there is a problem or when you need something from them, you will not establish a positive relationship.
- **Manage expectations about involvement:** Determine which stakeholders you simply want to inform, which stakeholders you want to give a greater say in decision-making, or which you may look to for advice. Ensure that you are on the same page with these stakeholders about their expectations of involvement. If people expect to be involved in decision-making, but you only inform them – no matter how well you inform them – the predictable result will be tension in your relationship.

You can also influence the quality of company-community relationships in three more ways:

1. Take, and be seen to take, responsibility for project impacts, be they environmental, social, health-related, and so on.
2. Distribute benefits (jobs, contracts, community projects) transparently so your efforts are perceived as fair.
3. Demonstrate respect for local stakeholders and their concerns.

High level principles like fairness, transparency, responsibility, and respect can mean different things to different stakeholders in different contexts. It is critical that companies ask questions of local stakeholders to understand how companies can demonstrate these principles through their actions, in the specific context of your project.

First Phase: Before You Leave



First Phase: Before You Leave

Step 1: DO DESKTOP PREPARATION

Before you make your first visit to the project site, prepare yourself. This does not need to be complicated, but it is critical. Go online and search for information on a short list of key factors such as conflict in the area, presence of indigenous peoples or traditional sites, protected environmental areas, past mining activity and attitudes towards it. To find this information, search for the following: the name of the community and province/region, civil society groups in the area, the name of your or other companies that work or have worked there, and so on. The following checklist will help you get a preliminary sense of the above-ground situation in the project area:

SOURCE	WHAT TO SEARCH FOR?	WHY?	✓
General socio-political context in the region (travel websites, country-specific websites)	1. History, cultural issues, main political parties, ethnic make-up of the population	– To be aware of sensitive issues, demonstrate respect, avoid missteps	
	2. Cultural issues of significance, traditions, local beliefs, local languages (including indigenous languages)		
	3. Overall health, education and well-being statistics	– To determine the degree of pressure on the company to provide access to basic services and/or infrastructure	
	4. Behavior of law enforcement authorities	– To determine whether law and order exist. What is the reputation of the groups that will provide security to the project?	
	5.The level of democracy, presence and level of activity of civil society	– To identify potential challenges related to corruption or mistrust of public officials – To identify local organizations that can help you understand the operating environment	
	6. Social make-up of the region (indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees, etc.)	– To identify stakeholder groups and any history of conflict between them that you should be sensitive to – To locate indigenous peoples near the area of exploration – To verify if there is a history of displacement of indigenous people, particularly in the area of interest	

SOURCE	WHAT TO SEARCH FOR?	WHY?	✓
Situation around the project area (Google Earth, business-human rights.com)	7. The distance between the project and local communities or towns	– To establish population density, which could signal the potential for project impacts (e.g., dust, noise) – To determine the potential of the area as a source of job-ready employees or local contractors/service providers	☐ ☐
	8. Extent of road network	– To identify potential traffic-related issues that could affect your ability to access your site and bring in equipment (e.g., drilling rigs)	☐
	9. The type of housing construction	– To determine the building type and construction material (e.g., corrugated iron roofs, cement block walls), which may indicate the level of wealth in the area	☐
	10. Cultivation of land	– To determine the size of land plots and type of agriculture (i.e., cash crops vs. subsistence farming), which can indicate the level of poverty and the complexity of land ownership and land-use rights – To verify the extent of forest use and whether forests are valuable community assets as sources of firewood, food, and medicine and have cultural significance	☐ ☐
Areas with pre-existing mineral projects (internet search, contact other companies)	11. General legacy of mining in the country 12. Legacy of any existing project(s)	– To address the following: › Is mining often covered by the national/local media? Does coverage have a positive or negative tone? › Are there any other exploration projects or mines in the area? › Are there any outstanding legacy issues? › Are there any advocacy groups in the area? › Have there been any protests recently?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Step 2: CONDUCT A COMPANY BRIEFING

Before you or anyone else goes to the project site, you should discuss how you will approach community engagement. In particular, arrange a briefing with your senior management team. This will help ensure you can effectively represent your company at the site level and will help you feel comfortable answering questions on the company's behalf. During the briefing, ask for clarity on the following key areas:

KEY AREA	WHAT TO ASK	✓
1. Mandate	**What can you commit to on behalf of the company? What can you not?**	
	Examples:	
	– How much information can you share about the exploration activities?	☐
	– Can you commit to hiring only local people for non-skilled labour positions?	☐
	– What is the timing on employment needs?	☐
	– Can you commit to remediation of any drilling sites or environmental impacts?	☐
	– Does your company implement any good practice guidelines, such as e3 Plus or the IFC Performance Standards?	☐
	– What authority do you have to provide funding for community events or projects?	☐
	– What is your mandate to engage with critics of the company?	☐
	– Can you commit to proceeding only with the "consent" of the community (and if so, do you have a methodology for defining what this means)?	☐
2. Key Messages	**How does senior management want the company to be presented?**	
	Examples:	
	– How do you describe the company?	☐
	– Does the company have any corporate values or policies relating to sustainable development, environment, health and safety?	☐
	– Does it have a position on, or approach to, securing the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous communities?	☐
	– Has the company made a commitment to respect human rights?	☐
	– How does the company describe its exploration activities, and the likelihood of the project advancing, so as not to create unrealistic expectations?	☐
	– In cases of pre-existing sites, how can the company distinguish itself from previous operators?	☐
3. Tools and Materials	**What engagement-related materials are available?**	
	– Does the company have any posters or leaflets you can use for engagement purposes (see the Company Brochure box below)?	☐
	– Are there any annual reports or publicly available reports you can refer to?	☐
	– Are there any engagement templates you can use to document and track your efforts?	☐
	– Do you have copies of relevant permits and the laws and regulations the company is required to comply with?	☐

Your company may not be accustomed to developing speaking points, but it is important for field staff to have some information or materials to share with local stakeholders. One useful resource you can develop with input from senior management is a company brochure.

Company Brochure

Create a company brochure in the local language to present to people in the community. The brochure should have general information about your company, specific information about the planned exploration project, and contact information for you and the company.

A company brochure demonstrates willingness to share information proactively, keeps the community informed, and opens the lines of communication. The information in the brochure can also be a starting point for dialogue between you and the community. Information could include:

- A basic description or clear pictures that summarize the company's proposed activities (recognizing that communities often don't know the difference between mineral exploration and mining)
- The company logo so people will begin to recognize it and the company's employees

Step 3: PREPARE FOR YOUR FIRST VISIT

Setting up meetings with high-level people or organizations before you arrive in-country will help you make the most of your first few days on the ground. These meetings are an opportunity to ask about other groups or institutions you should contact (likely, you will be referred to them during these sessions). The following are key people and organizations you should arrange to meet:

WHO	WHY	✓
1. Trade Commissioners at the closest Canadian embassy or consulate	A trade commissioner's job is to help you on your journey, such as providing advice on how to engage with local stakeholders. You can find the closest trade commissioner at www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/eng/offices-worldwide.jsp.[5]	☐
2. Chamber of Mines or the Chamber of Commerce	Chamber staff can give you an overview of the experiences of other companies, of the local legal framework, and of relevant local legislation in relation to exploration, land rights and land title.	☐
3. Other companies working in the country	The staff of other companies can share their knowledge and experiences of the project area. It is far easier to build on lessons learned from those who have gone before, than to go in cold.	☐
4. Ministry of Natural Resources	Ministry staff can identify local laws and regulations that are relevant to your project and to the local community. They can also provide an overview of the successes and challenges of previous companies.	☐
5. NGOs and community relations consultancies	These groups can give you an idea of the key issues that gain media attention or impact public opinion in the area. They can help you understand the community dynamics and may be familiar with the presence and priorities of relevant civil society groups and politicians. NGOs will also likely be aware of the presence of indigenous peoples.	☐

5 In addition, you can find the closest mission providing consular services at www.travel.gc.ca/assistance/embassies-consulates.

Second Phase: When You Arrive

Second Phase: When You Arrive

You only get one chance at a first impression. When you arrive at the project site and begin setting up for exploration, start working to develop your understanding of the project area and on establishing contact with key stakeholders. Your first week should not be about securing an agreement with local communities. There are four steps in this second phase:

Step 4: GET BRIEFED

If you have set up meetings with high-level groups in advance, you can arrive in-country and immediately begin discussions. These preliminary meetings with high-level groups serve two main purposes: (1) they verify the desktop research you conducted before leaving; and (2) they prepare you for the formal introduction meetings at the project area.

The following practical tasks will help you make the most of these meetings and enhance your engagement efforts in the project area:

TASKS	DETAILS	✓
1. Cross-check the information you collected during your desktop research	Preliminary meetings with other companies, the embassy, Chamber of Mines, community relations consultancies and other entities will help you verify your research. Share your information with them, ask for their assessment of whether it is accurate, and ask what else you should know. For example, do they have advice about what you should or shouldn't discuss with community stakeholders? Can they identify any big local issues you should be aware of or discuss the legacy of mining in the area?	☐
2. Check if you need an introduction letter to present to leaders/ authorities in the project area	Sometimes showing up in the project area without an invitation letter from the government or other authorities may lead to suspicion or refusal of access to the project site.	☐
3. Find an appropriate translator	In most cases, it's helpful to hire a translator who is not from the local area. Bringing in an outsider can help you avoid unintentionally aligning yourself with a particular group in the community and making a poor first impression by demonstrating a bias towards one group. Other companies working in the area, business associations, your embassy or consulting firms can recommend qualified translators to you. It's important to spend time with your translator before arriving at the project site. He or she can learn the company's messaging through conversation with you, rather than hearing it for the first time during the initial meeting. Also check whether the local language has terms for exploration and other activities you may wish to discuss. Many indigenous languages lack many of the usual exploration and mining terms.	☐

TASKS	DETAILS	✓
4. Ask about the local protocol for introducing yourself	Most cultures require that first meetings follow a certain protocol that specifies who you need to see first. This could be a local mayor, a chief, a traditional leader or someone who informally represents the community. Sometimes these first meetings involve gift-giving or other customs. If you can't find out during your high-level meetings what the local customs are, ask owners of local shops or businesses as you approach the project area – they should be able to advise you. Also check whether there are any inappropriate gestures or body language you should avoid (e.g., in some parts of the world, showing the sole of your shoe is considered rude). Also ask during initial discussions if it would be wise to get cross-cultural sensitization training and, if so, who offers it.	☐
5. Find out who the key stakeholders are in the project area	It's often helpful to solicit suggestions from the people you meet with about who the key stakeholders are, even if you won't be able to meet with them all. Not only can this process give you a sense of how well institutions at the capital level are connected to the project area, but it may give you the "legitimacy" to conduct visits in the project area (i.e., "I'm here because the Chamber of Mines suggested I visit with X or Y").	☐

Step 5: CONDUCT FORMAL INTRODUCTIONS

Your first formal introduction meetings in the project area won't be, in most cases, the pressurized meetings you might expect. On the contrary, the sole purpose of these short meetings is to establish contact. It is not to secure an agreement or make a deal about gaining access to land. This is particularly important to remember if you arrive unannounced; local leaders may feel wary about doing or saying anything on the spot and may ask you to come back at a more appropriate time.

To build a healthy company-community relationship and secure community support for the project, there are three essential steps. First is initiating the relationship. Second is determining the rules for engagement. Third is discussing specific issues, which is best to begin doing once the relationship is established and the way you will deal with each other is understood. A common mistake people make is focusing too early on specific issues, such as trying to secure land access. Often they encounter challenges because they forgot to complete the first two steps – which are designed to make stakeholders comfortable – before making any formal arrangements.

The structure of a first meeting generally follows a common pattern:

STAGE OF THE MEETING	POSSIBLE QUESTIONS OR DISCUSSION POINTS
1. Introduction	– Thank people for taking the time to receive you. It's usually helpful to say how you feel about being able to visit their community, country or region. – If necessary, apologize for coming unannounced. – Introduce yourself. Depending on the situation, people often appreciate knowing more than just a name and position. Offer more personal information (e.g., your hometown or country, family situation and any experience in the country or region). Such information can help set a personable tone for the discussion

STAGE OF THE MEETING	POSSIBLE QUESTIONS OR DISCUSSION POINTS
2. Explanation of purpose for the visit	– Explain that this meeting is just to introduce yourself. – Inquire if you followed the correct protocol; present yourself as a guest to the area. – Explain that you understand if meetings with a larger group or other individuals need to take place that you're happy to do this whenever is convenient. – Explain the basics of what is involved in mineral exploration[6] and that you have government permission to operate in the area. Consider carrying copies of exploration permits with you or the contact details of officials who could verify that permits have been granted to your company.
3. Exchange of information to solidify the relationship	– Ask if anyone told them about your company. – Do they know about exploration and mining, and, if so, what is their general impression? – Have they had any direct contact with exploration or mining companies, and, if so, what were their experiences? – Ask if there are any culturally significant issues or sites you should know about.
4. Exchange of information to establish the process going forward	– Propose a follow-up meeting to discuss exploration-related activities in more detail. – Explain the rest of your engagement plan. For example, "The Ministry suggested I also speak with X and Y. Do you have any suggestions of people with whom I should also speak?" – Be explicit about future engagement. For example, "What is the best way for me to share information with you on how we are progressing? How regularly would you like me to be communicating with you?"
5. Close the meeting	– Thank people for the meeting and summarize/confirm the issues that have been discussed. – Ask for suggestions about what they would be interested in learning more about. – Set up the next meeting.
6. Subsequent meetings	– Explain the exploration process (e.g., typical timeline, differences between exploration and mining, likelihood of finding an economical deposit, employment opportunities). – Clearly explain that your company may only be there temporarily. – Explain what the community might expect to see (e.g., new people, more cars, equipment being transported). – Commit to accountable and transparent communication. Explain that you will always be honest, both in the good times and bad (e.g., in case you have to deal with changes to pre-existing commitments). – Determine how often you will meet, who should be present, if minutes should be taken, who should chair the meeting, and so on.

6 PDAC, with partners, has produced an Exploration and Mining Guide that provides basic information on the different stages of the mineral development cycle. Although produced in English for Aboriginal communities in Canada, it has been translated and used in many countries around the world. You can find it at http://www.pdac.ca/programs/aboriginal-affairs/information/aboriginal-information/2012/12/18/exploration-and-mining-guide-for-aboriginal-communities.

TIPS

- If you are under time pressure, increase the frequency of meetings but do not attempt to take short cuts to "save" time; you won't. Typically, it's better to have several short meetings with short agendas than a few very long ones.

- In some situations, local leaders might be slightly apprehensive about your presence. Where appropriate, ask for permission to informally speak to other members of the community. For example, you might ask, "Is it acceptable to you if I speak to other members of your community so that I can learn more?"

Here are some more general tips on engagement practices:

DO	DON'T
– Ask how the community is organized – Ask how you can help local people get a better understanding of what you are doing – Allow people to speak their minds, even if you do not agree with their opinions – Acknowledge people's concerns ("I'm glad that you asked that") – Listen at least as much as you speak – Show that you listened: summarize the point someone made and ask if you understood correctly – Apologize on behalf of the company if it made a genuine mistake – Ask for examples to make sure that you have a solid understanding of what people are telling you – Show empathy and try to place yourself in other people's situations – Try to be as precise and exact as possible ("May I come back to meet you next Monday at 10 a.m. in your office?") – If you do not have an exact answer to a question, be honest and say you do not know, but promise you will get back to them with that answer – Always follow through on your promises – Meet with people when there is no direct "need"; ask if there is anything they want to discuss or if they have any questions – Provide complete, unbiased information with explanations and education, if necessary, to ensure that it is properly understood	– Make promises about jobs or project outcomes – Ask about what people "need" – Try to make a deal or agreement before you have established a relationship – Talk too much and listen too little – Interrupt when other people are speaking – Be accusatory or blame others – Say you do not have any budget – Come up with other excuses if they are not true or genuine – Defend the company if it made a mistake – Refer to, or call upon, your company or senior management when you know the answer yourself and can handle the situation – Use vague phrases like "We will consider this in the future" or "I will refer this to management" – Give answers to questions if you are not 100% certain that you are correct – Show off: for example, if you need to travel a short distance, walk (and talk to people) instead of drive – Give, or appear to give, preferential attention, information or benefits to one group within the community over another – Offer incomplete or biased information or opinions

Step 6: OBSERVE YOUR SURROUNDINGS

There's a lot of information you can gather by simply observing your environment as you drive or walk to the project area. Observing your surroundings for a few days allows you to verify your desktop research and update your initial understanding of the context in which you are working. Here are some specific things to look for:

GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	✓
1. The general socio-economic situation	– Are there many people on the street? How do people move: by foot or community taxi, or do they have their own cars?	☐
	– Observe buildings, noting construction materials, conditions and up-keep. For example, roofs made out of leaves, corrugated iron or clay tiles, and peeling paint, cracks in masonry and boarded windows may indicate relative poverty.	☐
	– Notice driving behavior: do local taxis and other traffic pose a safety risk to the community (and potentially the exploration team)?	☐
	– If this is an agricultural area is farming mechanized or done by hand?	☐
	– Are the land plots small or large, subsistence or industrial?	☐
	– Look at the local markets: are they large and abundant? Do they have a great variety of vendors, or do they largely consist of small food stalls?	☐
	– Are there any banks in the area or does it seem to be a cash economy?	☐
	– Are there many school-aged kids on the street during working hours?	☐
	– Look for exceptions, such as things that appear to be "different." Are there mansions in an otherwise modest town? Are there large land plots among small ones? Does one area of town look better kept than all the other areas?	☐
	– What goods or services appear to be available in local markets or in the centre of town?	☐
	– Look for the presence of services that indicate disposable income: bars, restaurants, video halls, internet cafés, and so on.	☐
	– Assess the safety situation: do people walk around at night? Are there any night markets? Do women walk by themselves after dark?	☐
	– Are there any signs of small-scale mining (e.g., gold buying outfits, lots of places that sell water-pumps, buckets)?	☐
2. The extent of the state's presence	– Is there any indication that the community follows a municipal development plan?	☐
	– Are infrastructure services visible (e.g., waste collection, water reservoirs, quality of roads, phone towers, public transport)?	☐
	– Is there any visible presence of state security/police forces? If so, what signal does their presence send? Are they patrolling officers or a paramilitary-style militia?	☐
	– Drive by the schools, clinics, water stands and other public services: are there any signs of overcrowding?	☐
	– Do you see any posters of political parties posted? These could indicate that the area is considered important enough for campaigning. Where possible, try to assess the local view of national and local politicians to verify their level of popular support.	☐

GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	✓
3. Conditions in areas with pre-existing exploration or mining projects	– Do other companies' cars have meshed windows? Are there any signs of damage to company vehicles as a result of stone throwing?	☐
	– What message are companies sending through employees' driving behaviour? Are they driving slowly with the windows down or fast and furious?	☐
	– If the companies have notice boards, are these still intact or have they been vandalized?	☐
	– Are there any anti- and/or pro-mining slogans on walls, buildings or other structures?	☐
	– When you wave to people, do they wave back?	☐
	– Do job seekers hang out in front of the main gate of sites?	☐
	– Do company employees wear clothes with the company logo when they are in town?	☐
	– Is there any sign of an influx of people (e.g., crowded houses, new houses built in backyards)?	☐

While gathering information should not end with your visual observations, walking or driving around will help you establish first-hand impressions of the area, which you can discuss during subsequent informal meetings with stakeholders.

Step 7: CONDUCT INFORMAL MEETINGS

After your formal first introductions and your visual observations, conduct some informal discussions with people in the community. For example, talk to people in tea houses, markets, shops, pool halls, and taxis. In most places, it's easy to start a conversation. An introduction can be as easy as, "Hi, my name is George, and I'm going to be doing some work nearby. I'd like to get to know your community and your culture. Can you tell me what it is like to live here? What are some things I should be aware of?"

These discussions will be very informal and fairly short. Listen for things that indicate cultural sensitivities, leadership dynamics, perceptions about authorities, experiences with previous companies, and make sure to confirm some of the visual observations you made earlier. Remember that on occasion, the real influence in a community comes from the informal leaders – elders or local activists – who need to be included in engagement efforts. In public meetings they may be the people sitting quietly at the back of the room "taking it all in."

Be ready to share information about the company and about yourself – where you are from, your family situation, and other personal information. Local people will likely be as curious about you as you are about them.

Although the following list of questions is not exhaustive, you can use it to guide your informal discussions:

WHO	WHAT DO YOU ASK	✓
1. Youth at taxi stands or pool halls **2. Women at markets or watering places (rivers, tap stands) – be aware of culturally appropriate interactions between men and women** **3. Local business owners in tea houses, barber shops and other gathering places** **4. Informal leaders such as religious officials, school teachers, business leaders, civil society leaders**	– What do people like about the area? Do they see it as a good place to live? Why or why not?	☐
	– Who do they see as people in the community that have credibility? Who do they listen to? Are these formal or informal leaders?	☐
	– Are there different subgroups or clans in the community?	☐
	– Are there any existing schisms or conflicts in the community?	☐
	– If the company wants to consult with "the community" on a more ongoing basis, how should it go about doing that? Are there regular meetings through a council or assembly? If so, how well attended are they?	☐
	– Which people in the community should the company engage with?	☐
	– What do they suggest that the company should do to avoid making mistakes?	☐
	– Is there any particular information about the project or the company that the community might like to receive?	☐
	In areas with pre-existing projects:	
	– Have they heard about your project? If so, what do they know? Do they think of the project positively or negatively?	☐
	– What are some of the changes people have seen since other companies started working in the area?	☐
	– How do they assess the overall relationship between the companies and the community?	☐
	– What are the types of policies and behaviours that your company should duplicate, or, alternatively, avoid?	☐
	– Do people feel they have access to the companies?	☐

By the end of your first week, you should have a good sense of the key stakeholders and an understanding of the project context. You'll be building on this initial knowledge baseline as you advance your work, so it is important to document your activities from day one. (See the next section for tools to help you record your engagement activities.)

Third Phase: While You Explore

Third Phase: While You Explore

Step 8: DEEPEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE

In your first few weeks and months, you should deepen your knowledge about the project context. It is critical that your engagement continues after the initial visits. Some areas you will want to gain more knowledge about include:

DEEPEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	✓
1. People	– What is the status of the subgroups in the community (youth, elders, women, etc.)?	☐
	– Who are the formal and informal leaders? (religious leaders, teachers, etc.)	☐
	– Where there are indigenous peoples, how do they engage with other community groups? How are they viewed and treated?	☐
	– Are there any vulnerable groups in the community?	☐
	– Are there any institutions or individuals that enjoy broad legitimacy?	☐
	– What are the venues where people meet and exchange ideas?	☐
	– Are there any outsiders influencing the community (diaspora, community leaders residing in the capital, NGOs, small scale miners, politicians, etc.)?	☐
	– Are there absentee landlords? Do significant numbers of local people work for them during harvest time?	☐
	– Are there any immigrants living in the area?	☐
	– What does a person need to do to be considered "local"?	☐
	– Who are the decision-makers in the community? Who are (or could be) opponents of the project? Who could be influencers (either positively or negatively)?	☐
	– What is the land ownership structure: land users, land owners, or communal ownership?	☐
	– Are there any land conflicts?	☐
	Make sure you ask the same kind of questions of multiple people from multiple subgroups so you can cross-reference opinions. If different people offer similar answers, you know you are getting an accurate sense of a situation. If not, it will help you start learning and understanding the varying perspectives of different groups.	

DEEPEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	✓
2. History	– Is there a history of conflict or is the area relatively peaceful? – What is the level of access to government services? – What are people's perceptions about the role of the state?	☐ ☐ ☐
3. Culture	– What do people value from a cultural perspective? What key cultural norms and values should be taken into consideration by the company? – What are the traditional ways of resolving conflict? – If indigenous peoples are present, what is the best way to approach them? – What values do people share or have in common? What divides them? – Are there any special days, events or seasons that could affect scheduling?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
4. Issues not related to exploration or mining	– What issues are community members concerned about? – What issues are local, regional or national politicians raising? – What do people talk about informally at cafés or pubs? – Has the community changed over the past five years? If so, how and why?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
5. Perceptions	– How are outsiders viewed? – How are foreign companies viewed? – Do some communities perceive they are impacted by company activities and deserve consideration (even if the company does not consider them to be impacted)? – Are there any promises that have been made by previous companies or by authorities?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Below are three tools you may find helpful as you deepen your knowledge: an engagement record, a stakeholder analysis, and a risk register.

As part of developing a better understanding about the project area, keep a record of your engagement with community leaders and groups. An engagement log is a simple organizational tool that will be invaluable if your project advances to later stages of development. After each meeting, simply note the individual or group you met with, the date and location of the meeting, the issues discussed, and any follow-up activities you committed to (and the deadline for fulfilling those commitments).

ENGAGEMENT LOG					
DATE	LOCATION	STAKEHOLDER NAME	ISSUES DISCUSSED	COMMITMENTS	COMMENTS
08/08 2014	Woliso school	Local Chief	First intro, provided brochure, asked him some questions about the area	He didn't have questions so I suggested I visit him again next week to see if there's anything he wants to discuss	Chief says he receives good advice from the youth leader
08/09 2014	Pool hall	Youth Group	First intro, they had seen me around, asked what I was doing	No commitments but will continue informal engagement as they shared thoughts on other stakeholders to talk to	Youth are eager to know what employment opportunities exist
08/11 2014	Town square	*Mining our Future* (Civil Society Group)	First intro, provided brochure, serious concerns re: environmental impact; accused other companies of polluting river and not sharing revenue	Scheduled second meeting for next week – 08/18/12	Need to bring a visual overview of the exploration process

Along with your engagement record, conduct a simple stakeholder analysis. For example, for each group or person you meet, note whether they are a decision-maker in the community, a supporter or an opponent of the project or mineral development in general. Also record whether they have a positive, negative or neutral attitude towards the company.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS					
NO.	STAKEHOLDER NAME	DECISION-MAKER	INFLUENTIAL POWER (1-5)	SUPPORTER (S) NEUTRAL (N) OPPONENT (O)	WILLING TO ENGAGE WITH COMPANY?
1.	Local Chief	Y	5	N	Y
2.	Youth Group	N	3	S	Y
3.	Mining our Future (Civil Society Group)	N	2	O	N

7 This toolkit was developed by the PDAC in partnership with CDA Collaborative Learning Projects and World Vision Canada. Accessible at www.pdac.ca.

To broaden your knowledge, identify the risks and opportunities you may encounter throughout your project. In its simplest form, this process could be a brainstorming session with your team over dinner to assess social risks, their likely consequences, and what steps you could take to mitigate them. As a more formal process, consider creating a risk register to assess the likelihood of occurrence, level of impact, and mitigation strategies. (See the *Preventing Conflict in Exploration toolkit*[7] for more detailed guidance).

RISK REGISTER						
RISK CAUSE	**RISK**	**LIKELIHOOD H/M/L**	**IMPACT H/M/L**	**RATING H/M/L**	**MITIGATION ACTIONS**	**INTERNAL RISK OWNER**
Tension between youth groups	Conflict over hiring the 'wrong' people	H	H	H	– Discuss with both groups what a fair and transparent process would look like – Agree on a monitoring system	Project Manager
Core drilling	Rumors about company "stealing gold" could lead to protest	M	H	H	– Hold public meetings to explain exploration activities – Have an open day to show core drilling and sampling – Develop information materials	Geology

Recording engagement activities and tracking risks will help you assess how well your engagement approach is working. These documents will also serve as a useful resource for anyone taking over the project in the future. Tracking your efforts and monitoring key issues will help prevent surprises down the road.

TIPS

- **Set up an informal advisory group: If appropriate, consider establishing an informal advisory group with a few respected people from the community. You could invite them to a local restaurant occasionally to meet and chat informally (note that inviting them to meet at the exploration site could raise suspicions in the community). An advisory group could help keep the company informed about community concerns, emerging issues, or rumours. It could also give the company advice on how to respond to and resolve these problems.**

- **Use your local staff: The community does not just exist outside the gate. You work with community members every day at your site and project office. Learn from the insights local staff can provide as they understand the company's perspective, and are often an influential stakeholder group. Many community members base their perception of the company on the stories they hear from friends or family members who are employees.**

Step 9: ENGAGE ON KEY ISSUES

There are a few indicators that typically signal it's time to engage stakeholders more systematically regarding key aspects of your exploration activities. They include:

– You have a good understanding of who the formal and informal leaders in the community are.

– You have defined the group or area that might be impacted by your activities (local communities).

– You have identified good venues for interaction (e.g., an already planned public meeting where you can introduce yourself).

– You have identified a number of topics on which you want community feedback.

– You are hearing feedback from community members that they want more information on certain topics.

The following questions will help you prepare for conducting more systematic engagement. Review these questions periodically to ensure you are considering all facets of your engagement activities.

ENGAGEMENT PREPARATION QUESTIONS		
WHY	Why do you want to engage with this particular stakeholder?	Reasons may include building a base for project support, securing access to land for exploration purposes, hiring local staff, and mitigating risk of opposition. **Think about:** What would you like to walk out of the meeting with?
WHO	Who must/will you meet? Will it be a group? An individual? Any "observers" such as NGOs or politicians? Media?	Your list may include officials, chiefs, youth representatives, NGOs, and other community members or groups **Think about:** What is important to them? Do you have the right people in the room? Who else needs to be informed or involved?
WHAT	What are the key issues that matter to the person or group you're meeting with? What are the key issues that matter to the company?	Be aware of the issues, risks and opportunities that were raised during early informal discussions. **Think about:** What is the company's interest in these issues? Do you have the mandate to make a decision? What are the likely questions and concerns that might be raised?
WHEN	How often should you meet?	List each contact in your engagement log and how often you will meet with them (e.g., Chief X – once a week; shop owner Y – once every three months). **Think about:** How the frequency of engagement should match the risk or opportunity profile

ENGAGEMENT PREPARATION QUESTIONS		
HOW	What approach or tactics will you use?	Do you simply want to inform stakeholders or do you want to ask for advice, consult them on important issues, or even involve them in decision-making? **Think about:** Not everyone needs to be involved or consulted; some just need information. Select the right engagement approach for each group.
WHERE	Where will you meet? What events do you plan to attend in order to meet other people?	Engagement can occur at venues such as formal meetings, coffee shops, bars, public community meetings and cultural events. **Think about:** Each engagement venue serves a different purpose. Make sure you use a mix of venues to gain a broad perspective

At the early stages of an exploration project, you will likely discuss a small number of key topics:

TOPIC	DISCUSSION POINTS	RECOMMENDED APPROACH
Community consultation	– Provide project updates – Listen to local perceptions – Involve affected people in decision-making where possible	– Engage on an ongoing basis, not only in case of need
Land access	– What is the relationship between land owners and land users? – What is the process of gaining access to land?	– Agree with the community on an access protocol – Find out how different groups are likely to be impacted
Local employment	– What is a generally accepted definition of “local” staff? – What are the available skills and capacities? – Who else might be competing for the same workers (perhaps seasonally)? – What is perceived to be a fair distribution of jobs between communities and subgroups? – How will people perceive the hiring process as transparent (e.g., by using a lottery)? – What are considered fair wages locally?	– Do not make any promises – Ensure that the distribution of jobs is seen as a transparent process and perceived as fair

TOPIC	DISCUSSION POINTS	RECOMMENDED APPROACH
Local procurement	– What is the level of available goods and services in the area? – What contract-related information can the company provide to local companies and service providers?	– Initially, keep local procurement limited enough to avoid creating dependency, raising expectations or causing inflation for common consumer goods (e.g., for meat and bread)
Cultural heritage	– What sacred sites, cemeteries, places of importance should you be aware of and/or stay away from? – Are there any days the company cannot work because of cultural practices?	– Recognize that even if sites seem abandoned or forgotten, they may still have some cultural significance
Environmental or health impacts	– Are there concerns about impacts of exploration on water quality, traffic safety and other areas? – Does the community have any particular environmental concerns (e.g., legacy issues)?	– Recognize that environmental issues are often manifested as health concerns – Explain company policies and practices to avoid and mitigate these risks; take steps to let community members see this in action
Community investment	– What are the types of activities that bring people together or that they share or have in common?	– Each effort should have an exit strategy so that dependency is not created – Avoid providing free services (e.g., water and health care) – Develop a policy that explains what you are prepared to fund and – more importantly – what you will not; make sure this is broadly available in a format people can access (e.g., on notice boards, in newspaper ads, through radio announcements)

The Importance of Explaining Exploration Activities

In a Latin American country, a gold mining company was conducting drilling activities. There were two geologists, a project manager, and a driver on site for a period of five months. The project manager met with several key people in order to secure the necessary permits. He arranged with the mayor to use the main road through the town at night to transport samples in order not to contribute to daytime traffic. In the fourth month, there was a major protest and a roadblock of burning tires that appeared at midnight during a scheduled transport. The protest was a surprise to the mayor and to the team. The protestors were part of an indigenous group furious that the team had been secretly "transporting gold out of the town" during the night without providing any benefits or compensation to the community.

The project manager then held an open meeting with community members where he explained what activities take place at the exploration stage, what it means to take samples, and why they were doing it at night. He agreed to meet with the indigenous group and the rest of the community regularly and provide progress updates. Exploration activities continued uninterrupted afterwards.

Throughout all of your engagement activities with groups and individuals, be sure to discuss the best venue for future interactions and tell people how they can reach you. You may want to create a formal "community feedback mechanism," such as a telephone hotline or email address people can use to report their concerns anonymously. You could also schedule regular community forums where anyone can ask a question that may be on their mind (e.g., the first Saturday of every month from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the town square). Junior companies working in the same region could discuss pooling resources and developing a regional grievance mechanism to ensure that limited funds and staff time are used efficiently. Where appropriate, juniors could also partner with majors in the area and piggyback on their grievance mechanism.

When designing complaint or grievance mechanisms, it's important to involve community leaders. Doing so will reduce the risk of the community seeing such mechanisms as intimidating or lacking local legitimacy. Some companies have used information kiosks staffed by local (and trusted) people to help communities navigate company processes, which are often new to people.

Where the need for a formal grievance mechanism was not yet evident, companies have used their ongoing engagement as a de facto feedback or grievance mechanism. As an example, one exploration manager regularly ate supper at the same local café so that he could be available in a familiar, non-intimidating setting to community members who might have questions. Ensuring you are accessible to community members will help build a sense of transparency; acknowledging and addressing the concerns that are raised through the feedback process will build a sense of accountability and eventually trust.

You can find information on more formalized approaches in section 1.6, Grievance and Complaints Mechanisms, in the e3 Plus Social Responsibility Toolkit.[8] You can also explore related resources produced by the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA).[9]

8 http://www.pdac.ca/programs/e3-plus/toolkits/social-responsibility/governance

9 http://www.ipieca.org/publication/operational-level-grievance-mechanisms-good-practice-survey

Step 10: MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

A common cause of breakdowns in relations between companies and communities is the failure of one or both parties to deliver on commitments that have been made, or that were perceived to have been made. It's very easy for intentions to be misunderstood. Phrases like "I will think about it," "I will discuss that with my boss," or "I am sure you will benefit from our presence," can easily be taken out of context and considered to be a promise.

You can manage expectations systematically by using a combination of the following approaches:

1. ***Establish a policy for making promises and/or commitments***

- For example, decide at the outset that only certain people can make a promise and that all promises or commitments will be made in writing.
- Ensure the company maintains a written list of all commitments made (with the date and name of the person(s) the commitment was made to).

2. ***Educate your team as well as your contractors and subcontractors***

- Share the policy and confirm who has authority to make promises in writing.
- Explain how easy it is to inadvertently make a commitment.
- Emphasize the need to use clear and careful language.
- Explain that the team should only give answers to things they are certain about.
- Agree together on what team members and contractors should say when they don't have an answer or authority to provide an answer.
- Stress the need to manage expectations.

3. ***Explain the policy repeatedly and through more than one format (e.g., verbally or in brochures) to the broader community***

- Explain to local stakeholders how your company defines a promise – this will help prevent misunderstandings while also establishing accountability (e.g., if a contractor makes a promise, the community knows to insist it be given in writing).
- Explain and reiterate the unpredictable nature of early exploration. Be transparent about the fact that long-term commitments cannot be made until you have more clarity about the viability of the project.
- Provide communities with contact information for the company's senior manager and encourage them to reach out if they feel that a promise has not been fulfilled (make sure that the senior manager answers or returns calls or emails).

4. ***Be transparent wherever you can about the exploration activities you are conducting or plan to conduct***

- Hold open days or guided visits to a core shed to dispel rumours that the company is already mining or is "stealing" minerals.
- With the exception of commercially sensitive information, encourage your staff to discuss the project with community members who ask questions about the project. Sharing general information could help dispel rumours and manage expectations.

Tips for Clear Communication

One engineer described communication as “sending a message from a transmitter through a medium to a receiver.” While this may be technically accurate, in the context of engagement, it’s not a complete picture. You should think not only about sending a message, but also about how the message is received, ensuring that the receiver of your communication understands it as you intended. Be sensitive to subtle signs that demonstrate whether your message was clearly understood. Here are some tips for clear communication:

1. Place yourself in the position of other people: what lens do they see the situation through? How will they convey the message to their constituency?
2. Look at the body language of other people (“read” the mood). Are they defensive (arms crossed, leaning backwards) or open (seated comfortably, relaxed posture)? Are they disengaged (looking at their watch, playing with their phone, eyes wandering) or engaged (nodding, making eye contact)?
3. Listen for hints of approval/disapproval and adapt. Do not insist on continuing with your scripted presentation or agenda if people are not being receptive to it. Try to avoid jargon or using short forms that are not well known or understood.
4. Ask questions about how people are feeling: “Is this what you hoped to discuss?” or “I see from your reaction that I might be missing the point, is that correct?” Never blame someone for not understanding.
5. Ease into the discussion by starting in a “light” way with small talk. This can help you gauge the mood of other people and build rapport. Easy topics are the weather, sports or agricultural season. If you have met someone before and spoke about personal or family issues, follow up on those topics.
6. Be aware of, and sensitive to, the dynamics in the room. Engage with everyone so they feel acknowledged, even if they are not actively participating in the discussion.
7. Make sure you always allow people to save face. There will be no good outcomes if people feel embarrassed, dismissed or offended.
8. Acknowledge any tension in the meeting, and end it by saying, “That was a tough meeting, but I’m glad I have a better understanding of where you are coming from.”

Step 11: EVALUATE YOUR EFFECTIVENESS

Evaluating the effectiveness of your engagement efforts is fairly simple. Be aware of any changes in the tone of meetings with leaders and community members. If they become less friendly, more demanding or send accusations flying your way, then you'll know that things are heading in the wrong direction. On the other hand, if people extend a friendly welcome and demonstrate a shared sense of purpose, then you'll know the relationship is healthy and positive.

Another way to assess your effectiveness is to review the visual observations you made when you first arrived and the notes you made at your first meetings. Have you seen any changes in the behaviour or habits of local stakeholders? If so, are those changes positive or negative? You can also gauge the effectiveness of your engagement efforts by noting changes in people's attitudes and actions. Consider these indicators:

– New notices from the company remain on the bulletin boards without being defaced

– Theft levels are lower; there is less or no destruction of company property

– There is no upward trend in community incidents or complaints

– People associate improvements in their quality of life with the presence of the company

– Outsiders campaigning on an anti-corporate platform get no local support

– Community requests for assistance focus on skill development instead of demands for material things

– Little or no public outrage occurs following accidents

– Community members identify troublemakers and inform company staff about rumours in the community

– People feel they have access to site management and say the company is responsive to their concerns

– People wave back when greeted

– Attendance levels at public meetings are consistent

– There is a trend (noticeable increase or decrease) in the number and type of issues brought to the attention of the company through a grievance mechanism

You can explore more indicators of effective engagement in the *Preventing Conflict in Exploration Toolkit*.

If you feel you've implemented good engagement practices but still see signs that your efforts have not been effective, consider asking a trusted member of the community (e.g., a school principal or religious leader) to provide feedback. You could also ask the advisory group to comment on your practices. You will usually get an honest response when stakeholders see your efforts are sincere.

Final Phase: When You Leave

Final Phase: When You Leave

Dealing with uncertainty is part of mineral exploration. The success rate for prospecting and early exploration projects is extremely low, with fewer than 1 in 10,000 mineral showings discovered actually becoming a mine. Add to that the high probability that a project will change ownership during the exploration phase, not to mention over the life cycle of a mine. While these realities may be clear for people working in the industry, they are often not well understood by communities impacted by exploration projects. Even if you have explained the unpredictable nature of exploration, your company's departure from the site – whether it's for the season, until the market recovers, or for good – may come as a shock to the community. Leaving on good terms with community stakeholders will be critical for the future of your project, and can have a serious impact on the impression that stakeholders will have of the mining industry overall.

As you prepare to leave your project, give some thought to the following considerations:

STAKEHOLDERS	CONSIDERATIONS	✓
1. Local communities	– Have you explained to community members why you are leaving and do they understand?	☐
	– Have you considered ending on a festive note (rather than simply disappearing), such as organizing a community event?	☐
	– Are there any outstanding commitments or promises you need to fulfill or address?	☐
	– Do you plan to keep the community updated on the state of the project while you are away? If so, how?	☐
	– Do you have good engagement records so, if your company sells the project, your successors will know what has been discussed (including any outstanding commitments)?	☐
	– Do you have a good complaints and grievances record? Are there any outstanding grievances you need to address before your departure?	☐
	– Have you taken steps to ensure the exploration site will not pose any safety or environmental risks during your absence?	☐
	– Is there a way for the community to contact the company?	☐
2. Local workers/ contractors	– Have you provided local workers with a reference letter or other document they could use to secure future employment?	☐
	– Did you consider providing local workers with help in drafting a resume to increase their chances of finding employment?	☐
	– Are you sure that all outstanding bills have been paid and accounts settled with local contractors and goods and services providers?	☐
	– Are there any local contracting opportunities that could be continued during your absence (e.g., security contracts, environmental monitoring)?	☐
3. Local authorities	– Is there a plan to use or maintain any remaining physical structures during your absence, or are you handing them over?	☐
	– Have you fulfilled any site clean-up or reclamation requirements?	☐

The uncertainty of mineral exploration does not mean there should be uncertainty about relationships with local communities. By demonstrating respect for local stakeholders, their values and their way of life, and by taking the time to listen and learn, you can implement a simple but effective engagement program that will allow your company to conduct its work in a stable environment. From desktop research, to boots on the ground, to saying goodbye, effective community engagement can and should be a straightforward part of any responsible mineral exploration project.

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